

II. Remarks

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3-5, and 7 are pending in the application. Claim 1 is independent. Claim 1 has been amended herein. Claims 2 and 6 had previously been cancelled. Claim 1 has been amended for clarity with respect to the specification and the drawings, and not for any reason related to any requirement for patentability. Support for this amendment may be found, for example, in paragraphs [0058] – [0066] of the instant application. Accordingly, no new matter has been added.

Claims 1, 3, 5, and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,867,825 to Kanatsu, et al. ("Kanatsu"), for the reasons provided at Pages 2-4 of the Office Action. Claim 4 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kanatsu in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,992,734 B1 to Morishita, et al. ("Morishita"), for the reasons provided at Pages 4 and 5 of the Office Action. These rejections are traversed.

As amended, independent Claim 1 recites a liquid crystal display device. The liquid crystal display device includes a U-shaped main body case having opposing side walls and other open portions and a relatively wide bottom wall, a backlight unit housed in the main body, a lamp-supporting stage of the backlight unit disposed at the open end of the main body case, and an optical member placed on the surfaces of both side walls of the main body case and on the lamp-supporting stage while covering the backlight unit. The outer periphery of the optical member is encased by reinforcing

frame segments that are formed like a picture frame which is constructed by different members with the main body case and the lamp-supporting stage. The reinforcing frame segments are constructed by members that are joined at corners, fixed to the main body case and the lamp-supporting stage, and have a structure covering the surface side edge of the outer periphery of the optical member.

Kanatsu discloses a liquid crystal display device that includes a frame 1, a liquid crystal panel 2, and a diffuser 5, the liquid crystal panel 2 and the diffuser 5 being supported by a frame 6 formed of a white resin. As disclosed at column 5, lines 56-58 of Kanatsu, the "[e]dges of the display portion 2a of the liquid crystal panel 2 and edges of the diffuser 5 are supported by a resin frame 6. The frame 6 is made up of two short-side members 12 and two long-side members 13." As further disclosed at column 6, lines 41-52 of Kanatsu, "[a]n edge of the diffuser 5 is fitted in the groove 12d, whereby the groove supports the diffuser. The stepped portion 12e is a portion in which a polarizer (not shown) of the liquid crystal panel 2 is received. . . . The lamp mounting members 9 (see FIG. 3) are fitted in and held by the recesses 12f." Accordingly, Kanatsu discloses that the reinforcing frame segment 12 performs a plurality of functions, including supporting the lamp mounting members 9, the diffuser 5, and the liquid crystal panel 2. In this manner, Kanatsu achieves the objective of reducing costs by using a single component, i.e., frame segment 12, to perform a plurality of functions; however, this configuration also has reduced reinforcing strength as compared with a device that uses separate reinforcing frame segments for separate respective support functions.

By contrast, in the present invention, amended independent Claim 1 recites that the reinforcing frame segments are formed like a picture frame which is constructed by different members with the main body case and the lamp-supporting stage, and that the respective reinforcing frame segments are fixed to the main body case and the lamp-supporting stage, respectively. Thus, in the present invention, a plurality of reinforcing frame segments are used to perform the several functions. By using a first reinforcing frame segment to support the main body case and a second reinforcing frame segment to support the lamp-supporting stage, the present invention provides the advantage that each separate component has its own reinforcing frame segment, thus improving the overall reinforcing strength of the entire display device. In addition, the present invention provides the advantage that a dimension of each respective reinforcing frame segment can be chosen to optimize its respective function, thereby increasing the dimensional accuracy of each such frame segment. By contrast, if a reinforcing frame segment performs a plurality of support functions, as disclosed by Kanatsu, then its dimension cannot be optimized to any one particular function.

In contrast to the disclosure of Kanatsu, independent Claim 1 recites that "the outer periphery of the optical member is encased by reinforcing frame segments that are formed like a picture frame which is constructed by different members with the main body case and the lamp-supporting stage, and wherein the reinforcing frame segments are constructed by members that are . . . fixed to the main body case and the lamp-supporting stage". Because this feature is not disclosed by Kanatsu, Applicants submit that independent Claim 1 is allowable over Kanatsu. In addition, each of Claims 3-5

and 7 depends from independent Claim 1, and each of these dependent claims is allowable over Kanatsu for the same reasons as those discussed above.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that this application is now clearly in condition for allowance, and a Notice thereof is respectfully requested.

Applicants' attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 625-3500. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,



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